

BIRD FLU



Avian Influenza, also known as bird flu, has been in the news a lot lately. What is it?

Bird flu is a subtype of influenza A virus that occurs mainly in birds and has been around for many years. Since 2003 'bird flu' has been found in more and more birds (mainly in Asia) and is highly deadly, particularly to poultry. The first human case was diagnosed in 1997. Since then, very few people have contracted Avian Influenza (AI).

This virus has spread very quickly to bird species other than poultry, and has the potential to spread worldwide because of the migratory habits of birds. Websites of the World Health Organization, (WHO) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, included in the references on the reverse side, are excellent and informative.

THE YEARLY, ROUTINE FLU SHOT
DOES NOT GIVE YOU IMMUNITY
TO BIRD FLU!!!

Precautions to take *if* you are in an area affected by bird flu

- Avoid contact with chickens, ducks or other poultry and their waste.
- Children are at higher risk; teach them to avoid contact with birds.
- Do not keep birds as pets.
- Wash hands with soap and water after any contact.
- Do not transport birds, even if you think they are healthy.
- Do not prepare poultry from affected areas.
- If you unintentionally come into contact with poultry in an affected area:
 - . Wash your hands immediately with soap and water.
 - . Remove shoes outside the house and clean them well.
 - . Check your temperature at least daily for 7 days.
 - . Call you health care provider if your temperature is above 37.5C or 99.5F.

TO DATE THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE IS NOT AN AREA AFFECTED BY BIRD FLU, AS FAR AS IS KNOWN BY HHS, CDC, OR WHO.

PLAN AHEAD AND PROTECT YOURSELF

The basic flu preventive measures remain the same.

- **Wash your hands frequently.**
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat a well-balanced, healthy diet.
- If you are sick, stay home. Use a thermometer to take your temperature, and call it in to your health care provider.
- Get plenty of rest.



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Frequently Asked Questions:

What is the risk to humans from bird flu?

The bird flu virus does not usually infect humans. In 1997, however, the first case of infection from a bird to a human was identified in Hong Kong. Most recently, human cases have occurred in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia. Almost all cases to date have occurred after direct contact with infected poultry.

How is infection in humans treated? Is there a vaccine?

Currently no vaccine has been approved to provide protection against bird flu. However, vaccine development efforts are under way. For more information about the vaccine visit National Institutes of Health's website at <http://www.nih.gov>.

Anti-viral compounds such as amantadine, rimantadine, zanamavir and oseltamavir (Tamiflu) have shown **some** efficacy against other Influenza A viruses, and initial studies suggest that it may be effective as a treatment for 'bird flu.' NO use of Tamiflu or other antiviral medications is recommended for prophylaxis against the disease.

Is it safe to eat poultry and eggs?

No human cases of AI contracted from poultry or egg consumption have been reported. Nonetheless, the World Health Organization recommends

5 Keys to Safer Food.

- Separate raw meat from cooked or ready to eat foods and do not use the same chopping board or knife
- Do not handle both raw and cooked foods without washing your hands in between
- Do not use raw or soft-boiled eggs in food preparations that will not be heat treated or cooked
- Keep clean with soap and water. Wash your hands after handling frozen, thawed, or raw chicken or eggs. Thoroughly wash surfaces and utensils that have been in contact with raw meat.
- Cook all poultry thoroughly – this will inactivate viruses. Ensure that the meat is not pink.
- Egg yolks should not be eaten when runny or liquid.



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How is the US Government helping to address the bird flu problem?

The US Congress appropriated 25 million dollars in June 2005 to help contain and prevent its spread. Our government has proposed an "International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza" to address the emerging threat.

What are the symptoms of bird flu?

Symptoms of bird flu in humans have ranged from typical flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches) to eye infections, pneumonia, severe respiratory diseases, and other severe and life-threatening complications. The most consistent symptoms include fever greater than 38C or 100.4F and a respiratory syndrome including a non-productive cough and sore throat.

REFERENCES:

<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/micro/avian1/en/>
<http://www.nih.gov>
<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian>
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/facts.htm>
http://www.cdc.gov/travel/other/avian_flu_indonesia.htm
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/mideast.htm>
http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/subjects/en/health/diseases-cards/special_avian.html